

Southern Appalachian Creature Feature Podcasts

Ochlawaha Bog

Greetings and welcome to the Southern Appalachian Creature Feature

We all know endangered species are rare. But there's rare and then there's rare. Bunched arrowhead is an endangered plant found only in two counties. In the entire world. Henderson County, North Carolina, and Greenville County, South Carolina.

It lives in Southern Appalachian bogs one of the rarest natural communities on the planet, with only about 500 acres remaining in North Carolina. The amount of bog acreage in existence has declined steadily over the past two to three centuries, but a little bit is about to be added in Henderson County.

Ochlawaha Bog is land currently owned by the Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy and the state of North Carolina and is home to the bunched arrowhead. The bog is adjacent to an old farm field that was created when at least one stream was channelized and now exists as a simple drainage ditch between the field and the bog, disrupting the flow of water through the bog, and threatening the survival of the bunched arrowhead plants.

However, a glimmer of hope comes in the recent purchase of the farm field by the land conservancy, allowing conservationists to begin returning the field to its natural state. With the help of stimulus funding, engineers and heavy equipment operators will restore part of the stream, returning it to a more natural flow. They're also going to excavate part of the farm field, and allow it to return to being a wetland.

For WNCW and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, this is Gary Peeples.